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STATE FOR L/PM MICHAEL COFFEE, PAM/PPA FOR JENNIFER L.  
HANLEY, PM/RSAT FOR BERNETA LEE, AND PM/RSAT JEFF BURNETT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/01/2018  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KTIA](#) [KPKO](#) [MARR](#) [MOPS](#) [BO](#)  
SUBJECT: 505 AGREEMENT/PEACEKEEPING: SIGNS OF SUPPORT

REF: STATE 27763

Classified By: EcoPol Chief Mike Hammer for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (SBU) PolOff and MILGP Commander delivered reftel diplomatic note March 28 to Ministry of Foreign Affairs Director of Bilateral Relations Jean Paul Guevara. An exchange of diplomatic notes constituting an agreement consistent with Section 505 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 is required before \$1.2 million in Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) funds can be made available for Bolivian troops in UN Peace Keeping Operations (PKO). Bolivia supports UN operations in Haiti and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

¶2. (C) Guevara seemed enthused about moving forward with a 505 agreement and about peacekeeping operations in general. He assured us Bolivian participation in UN peacekeeping operations had both broad bi-partisan political support and public support. Guevara said a response via diplomatic note for the 505 agreement "should not be a problem" and that the MOD would play the lead role on the agreement. "If the Ministry of Defense wants it, it will move forward quickly." He added that Bolivia was disposed to increase PKO if it could receive more international financial support.

¶3. (C) Guevara claimed the 505 agreement dipnote would be considered "completely separately" from an outstanding request from January 16 for a diplomatic note that would act as a Status of Forces Agreement, allowing our military TDY personal to operate in Bolivia. Guevara said that agreement has been held up "for reasons that have nothing to do with text or the agreement itself. You have to consider the broad historical and political context in the country." Although he would not provide an estimate for a dipnote response on the status of the U.S. military personnel, Guevara assured the 505 agreement would not suffer a similar delay for "political" reasons. Guevara said the reasons for the delay on the dipnote SOFA were "coming to a close" and said he would try and provide an estimate for an affirmative dipnote reply by the second week of April.

¶4. (C) Vice Minister of Defense Wilfredo Vargas told PolOff and MILGP Commander March 27 he would work with counterparts in MFA to get both diplomatic notes approved expeditiously. Vargas said increases in Bolivian participation in peacekeeping operations was a matter of ability not will. He commented that if more U.S. funds could be used to support Bolivian PKO contributions, the MOD would increase participation accordingly, including use of Bolivian naval forces to patrol rivers in Haiti. Separately, the Defense Committee Chairmen of both houses of Congress echoed Guevara's sentiments to us separately, explaining any doubts that the Morales administration would reduce Bolivia's role in peacekeeping were fully extricated during a joint session in 2007 renewing PKO obligations.

COMMENT

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¶5. (C) Although encouraged by the positive response to a 505 agreement and increased PKO role from the MFA, MOD, and Bolivian Congress, our optimism for a quick turnaround is guarded. We were also told the dipnote SOFA would not be a problem and given an estimate of two weeks for an affirmative dipnote response. We find it unlikely the Bolivian government will decline a 505 agreement, thus passing up significant funds for their armed forces with a minimal USG footprint. If they do, it would indicate a victory for hard-line ideologues that hold a political distancing of Bolivia from the U.S. above more pragmatic concerns, such as equipping and training their military. End Comment.  
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